

Submitter: Lexi Hagel
On Behalf Of: Oregon Student Association
Committee: House Committee On Higher Education
Measure: HB3121

My name is Lexi Hagel, I am a student at the University of Oregon, and I am here today to write a written testimony in support of HB 3121 with the -1 Amendment that will help make critical investments in Open Oregon Educational Resources, Oregon's statewide textbook affordability program.

I care about Open Education because of the effects of the high cost of textbooks and how they impacted my own family. My mother, Shawn Hagel, and my biggest role model in life attended the University of Southern California for five years. Throughout those 5 years, although being on a full academic scholarship, she still struggled due to all the additional costs that college presents. My mother worked two jobs throughout her college career just to make ends meet. At one point, she was forced to take a whole semester off because she could not afford the expenses. During this semester, she worked full time and focused on making money to support her education. My mom ended up graduating college with a significant amount of student debt, and during her early professional years her focus was on paying off that debt. My mother is now the successful CFO of a prominent company. With all this being said, although my mom was able to make a successful career for herself, she experienced so many hardships and stress, as she explained to me, that so many times she thought about giving up. If a program like the Open Oregon Educational Program had been in place when she was a college student, she could have focused more on her education and less on making ends meet. So, although I have not experienced the same hardships as my mother and so many other college students, I can see the impact it could make on students in need. When education costs so much and is going up every year, students are focusing on the day to day costs of living and less focused on their schooling efforts. With larger funding, students would be able to focus more on their education, and in turn we could potentially see a higher percentage of college graduates in the state of Oregon.

Thank you for your time, and I hope that I can count on your support of HB 3121 with the -1 Amendment.